

Message Text

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R 041150Z APR 75

FM AMEMBASSY NICOSIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1456

INFO AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

USMISSION USUN

USMISSION USNATO

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

C O N F I D E N T I A L NICOSIA 1236

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR PINT GR TU

SUBJ: CONVERSATION WITH GREEK AMBASSADOR DOUNTAS

REF: A) NICOSIA 1195 B) NICOSIA 1194 C) NICOSIA 1227

D) FBIS TA 022240Z

1. SUMMARY: GREEK AMBASSADOR IS RETURNING TO ATHENS THIS WEEKEND FOR CONSULTATION WITH BITSIOS AND KARAMANLIS. HE CONDEMNS GREEKS, AND PRAISES TURKS FOR RESTRAINT, DURING APRIL 1 EXCHANGES OF FIRE IN NICOSIA. SAYS GOG APPROVES MAKARIOS' AUTHORIZATION FOR OPENING A PLO OFFICE. CRITICIZES CLERIDES FOR RECENT PUBLIC STATEMENT ON ACCEPTANCE OF BIZONALITY. IS SCEPTICAL OF PROGRESS IN RESUMED TALKS. HAS A POSITIVE VIEW OF CAGLAYANGIL IN TERMS OF IMPROVED GREEK-TURKISH RELATIONS BUT THINKS HE AND DEMIREL WILL BE HANDICAPPED BY ERBAKAN. END SUMMARY.

2. GREEK AMBASSADOR DOUNTAS CALLED APRIL 3 FOR A TOUR D'HORIZON
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PRIOR TO DEPARTURE FOR ATHENS WHERE HE EXPECTS TO SEE BITSIOS

AND KARAMANLIS APRIL 7.

3. DISCUSSING THE HEAVY EXCHANGE OF FIRE WHICH BROKE OUT ALONG NICOSIA GREEN LINE EARLY A.M. APRIL 1 (REF A), DOUNTAS SAID GREEK (MAINLAND) ACTING COMMANDER OF NATIONAL GUARD HAD MOVED FORCEFULLY TO CONTROL HIS TROOPS AND COOPERATE WITH UNFICYP IN GETTING A CEASEFIRE. EOKA-VARIETY GREEK CYPRIOT SOLDIERS WHO HAD STARTED THIS "INSANITY" WOULD BE SEVERELY DISCIPLINED. SPEAKING PERSONALLY, DOUNTAS SAID HE THOUGHT TURKS HAD SHOWN ADMIRABLE RESTRAINT AND CONTROL AT THE OUTSET BUT AS PROVOCATION CONTINUED THEY NATURALLY HAD TO RESPOND.

4. I ASKED WHAT DOUNTAS THOUGHT OF MAKARIOS' DECISION (REF B) TO PERMIT OPENING OF A PLO OFFICE IN NICOSIA. DOUNTAS REPLIED THAT A GESTURE TO THE ARABS BY MAKARIOS WAS UNDERSTANDABLE ENOUGH. GREECE ITSELF WAS SEEKING CLOSER ARAB TIES AS EVIDENCED BY BITSIOS' CURRENT VISIT IN AREA. DOUNTAS ACKNOWLEDGED THAT GREECE HAD BEEN INFORMED IN ADVANCE BY GOC. INITIATIVE HAD COME FROM PLO. (COMMENT: WE CONTINUE TO BELIEVE THAT, ALTHOUGH PLO MAY HAVE EXPRESSED AN INTEREST SOMETIME AGO, IT WAS MAKARIOS, USING LYSSARIDES, WHO LET PLO KNOW THAT A FURTHER APPROACH WOULD BE RECEIVED POSITIVELY. END COMMENT.) WHEN I REMINDED DOUNTAS OF PLO'S CAPACITY FOR MAKING TROUBLE (KHARTOUM) AND CERTAINTY THAT ITS PROPAGANDA ACTIVITIES HERE WOULD HEIGHTEN ANTI-AMERICANISM, DOUNTAS SHRUGGED IT OFF SAYING MAKARIOS WOULD KEEP THINGS UNDER CONTROL AND CONTINUE HIS POLICY OF FRIENDLY, PRACTICAL TIES WITH ISRAEL AS WELL. INDEED, ISRAELI AMBASSADOR HAD BEEN SO INFORMED BY FONMIN CHRISTOPHIDES THE DAY BEFORE ANNOUNCEMENT MADE.

5. I QUESTIONED DOUNTAS ABOUT HIS VIEW OF CLERIDES' APRIL 1 SPEECH (REF C) WHICH SEEMED ESSENTIALLY AN ARGUMENT FOR ACCEPTANCE OF BIZONALITY. DOUNTAS STATED THAT CLERIDES, IN HIS DESIRE TO ESTABLISH HIMSELF AS AN ENTITY INDEPENDENT OF ARCHBISHOP, WAS ACTING PREMATURELY IN SPEAKING OUT IN FAVOR OF BIZONALITY AND DOING HIMSELF NO GOOD. HE MIGHT "SCORE SOME POINTS WITH FRIENDS" WHO THOUGHT ALONG THESE LINES (DOUNTAS' IMPLICATION WAS THE U.S.), BUT IN TERMS OF POLITICAL POWER HE COULD NOT HOPE TO STEP OUT FROM UNDER THE ARCHBISHOP'S SHADOW.

6. DOUNTAS ASKED FOR OUR EVALUATION OF REPORTS THAT TURKEY HAD
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INCREASED ITS TROOP STRENGTH ON CYPRUS BY 4000 OR MORE. I REPLIED THAT WE HAD GONE INTO THIS VERY CLINICALLY (DOUNTAS HAVING IMPLIED THAT WE MIGHT BE PREJUDICED BY THREAT THAT SUCH AN INCREASE WOULD POSE FOR ADMINISTRATION'S EFFORTS RESUME AID TO TURKEY) AND SAW ABSOLUTELY NO BASIS FOR SUCH REPORT. IN THIS, WE WERE IN AGREEMENT WITH UNFICYP.

7. ON RESUMPTION OF TALKS, DOUNTAS SAID IT LOOKED AS IF WE WERE

HEADING TOWARD APRIL 25 IN VIENNA PROVIDED DENKTASH AND THE TURKISH SIDE STOPPED MAKING STATEMENTS (REF D) ABOUT NARROW ROLE OF SYG. GREECE HAD BEEN COUNSELING MAKARIOS TO AVOID SPEAKING OUT ON THIS, BUT IF THERE WERE ANY FURTHER TURKISH STATEMENT, HE WOULD HAVE TO REPLY. I SUGGESTED IT MIGHT BE A GOOD THING FOR WECKMANN TO MAKE THIS POINT WITH DENKTASH.

8. DOUNTAS SAID THAT WHILE THE EFFORT HAD TO BE GONE THROUGH, HE PERSONALLY DID NOT THINK RESUMED TALKS WOULD PRODUCE ANY RESULT. HE ASKED WHETHER WE HAD HEARD ANYTHING FURTHER FROM TURKEY AS RESULT OF SECRETARY KISSINGER'S VISIT TO ANKARA AND WONDERED ALOUD WHETHER THE SETBACK IN THE MIDDLE EAST MIGHT NOT NEGATIVELY AFFECT THE SECRETARY'S PERSUASIVENESS IN OTHER SITUATIONS SUCH AS CYPRUS. I REPLIED IT HARD TO EXPECT TURKEY TO COME UP WITH DEFINITIVE VIEWS WHEN DEMIREL AND CAGLAYANGIL PREOCCUPIED WITH GETTING NEW GOVERNMENT APPROVED. AS TO U.S. DETERMINATION AND ABILITY INFLUENCE CYPRUS SITUATION CONSTRUCTIVELY, I SAW NO DIMINUTION AS A RESULT OF THE HOPEFULLY TEMPORARY IMPASSE IN MIDDLE EAST.

9. IN TERMS OF GRECO-TURKISH RELATIONS, DOUNTAS THOUGHT CAGLAYANGIL WOULD BE AN IMPROVEMENT OVER ESENBEL. HOWEVER, THE DEMIREL GOVERNMENT WOULD BE HANDICAPPED BY ERBAKAN FACTION.

10. AT CONCLUSION OF OUR CONVERSATION, DOUNTAS CAUTIONED ME AGAINST SPEAKING TO MUTUAL GREEK CYPRIOT FRIENDS ABOUT THE EVOLUTION OF A CYPRIOT CONSCIOUSNESS. GREEK CYPRIOTS WOULD ALWAYS BE GREEKS AND THINK OF THEMSELVES AS SUCH. THIS DID NOT MEAN THEY COULD NOT ALSO DEVELOP A PARALLEL LOYALTY TO AN INDEPENDENT STATE OF CYPRUS IF ONE COULD BE RECONSTITUTED, BUT IT PREFERABLE NOT TO SPEAK IN TERMS WHICH COULD BE CONSTRUED AS IMPLYING AND FAVORING A LESSENERED LOYALTY TO THE MOTHERLAND. I REPLIED THAT IN CONVERSATIONS WITH FRIENDS I WAS SIMPLY STATING A FACT. FROM
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BOTH GREEKS AND TURKS WE HAVE BEEN HEARING STATEMENTS TO EFFECT THAT THE TWO COMMUNITIES SHOULD LONG AGO HAVE SOLVED THEIR PROBLEMS AS CYPRIOTS, WITHOUT ALWAYS LOOKING OVER THEIR SHOULDERS AT THE MAINLANDS. THIS REPRESENTED A SIGNIFICANT AND, I THOUGHT, HEALTHY CHANGE FROM THE SITUATION A YEAR OR TWO AGO.
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